

Newport & Gwent Philately



Autumn Day Success

The stamp fair in Newport on 9 October 2004 was a great success, with more than 100 enthusiasts paying to come through the door.



Our thanks go to the staff at the Maes Ebbw School, the dealers (Roy Hollis, Chris Doble, Mark Grimsley, Dave and Coral Westcott and Ken Lane), the seven Federation clubs who took tables and Newport club members and helpers. As the England v Wales match at Old Trafford was being televised, most people came in the morning, stayed for lunch and then rushed back home for the 3pm start.

Recent meetings

The pre-season get togethers at members' houses kept everyone in touch over the summer months. The first meeting back at the Civic Centre was, as usual, for *new acquisitions*, when twelve members brought along a wide range of items.

The following meeting brought together the three newly accredited ABPS judges (John Perry, Gwen Hussey and George Whitefield) to display and talk about the perils of judging at club and federation level.

The first visit by club members was to Cardiff on 12 October by Martyn Britton (Fiji), Roy Bentley (Gilbert and Ellice), Gwen Hussey (postal service)

and John Perry (Iceland). The following evening saw a visit to Newport by members of the Bridgend club, when Maureen Phillips (Australia), Nigel McGaw (Too Late markings), Mike Styles (letter boxes) and Ron Gregory (USA) entertained us.

On 27 October, Bernie Riff told us in stamps, postcards and photos the story of his trip to the USA in 2001. Bernie's trip coincided with a meeting of ACE (the American Club for people who produce their own illustrated covers). Bernie was actually in the US on 11 September 2001 and he concluded his display with some covers that people produced to commemorate the first anniversary in 2002 of the tragic events of that day.

South Wales Federation

The Federation AGM on 23 October coincided with a stamp fair and a postcard fair in Cardiff and that may have depleted the numbers. In the morning, members showed up to 18 sheets from their collections. For Newport, Alistair Mackinnon brought some Antarctic material, Gwen Hussey displayed Christmas stamps and John Perry brought recent stamps engraved by Czeslaw Slania (22 October had been his 83rd birthday and he is still engraving). Of the displays from other clubs, two by Neil Prior of the early mails of Swansea stand out in my memory.

Items of interest from the AGM itself included progress on setting up junior clubs. Erene Grieve talked about her work over the past year and encouraged clubs to go into schools to start up stamp clubs. All we need is volunteers.

The next annual convention is once again in Port Talbot at the Princess Theatre on 30 April 2005. The special postcard will show postmarks from Cardiganshire (a card from Cards!). Port Talbot club offered to host the 2005 Autumn Day at a venue and date to be confirmed.

The South Wales Federation does not yet have a web site but Neil Prior produces three newsletters a year that are always available at Newport club meetings and in the exchange box.

Going Postal - Terry Pratchett

There are no so many novels centred round stamps. *Solomons Seal* by Hammond Innes comes to mind. So it was with great interest that I saw Terry Pratchett's latest book was called *Going Postal*. It is the story of Moist von Lipwig, a con artist who is made postmaster for Ankh-Morpork. Discworld fans and stamp collectors should enjoy this one.

Stamp fairs

Chris Doble's Dragon Fairs are at the Jury's Hotel in Cardiff on the first Friday in each month.

The Cardiff Stamp Fairs at the City Hall run by AMP Fairs continue. All start at 10:00 a.m.

Anne Scott continues her Bristol postcard fairs at the BAWA centre. The last fair for 2004 is on 11 December 2004.

The South Wales Postcard Club now runs two fairs each year, in April and October.

Post Office closures

There has been a lot of talk about post office closures over recent years. In the Gwent area, the number of post offices is now reducing fast. It is difficult to keep up with closures but Martyn Britton has provided a list of those since July 2003.

In the second half of 2003, Fields Park (Newport), Langstone, Pontywan, Freeholdland (Pontypool), High Street (Pontypool), Llantarnam, Hollybush, Royal Oak and Croesyceiliog all shuts their doors.



So far in 2004, Blaenau Gwent (Abertillery), Green Willows, Stanhope Street (Abergavenny), Bleinheim Square (Cwmbran), Pontrhydyrun, Gaskell Street (Newport), 262 Caerleon Road, Sebastopol, Stow Park (Newport), Garnlydan, Beaufort Hill, Badminton Grove (Ebbw Vale), Willowtown, Waunlwyd, Cefn Golau (Tredegar), Pontymister, Tintern, Trelleck, Mathern & The Bryn (Blackwood).

On the plus side Llanarth and Penhow post offices have re-opened this year.

Stamp Matters

On 2 October, the *Financial Times* had an article on the sale of the stamp collection of Sir Gawain Baillie, the late racing driver, by Sotheby's. It includes some remarkable rarities and is expected to realise at least £11 million.

The South Wales Argus on 29 October published a letter suggesting that the Post Office should release a stamp for the new Riverfront Arts Centre in Newport. What do members think about the events and places in Gwent that could appear on stamps?

Although the Post Office did not advertise its presence, the Eisteddfod in Newport from 31 July to 8 August 2004 had a counter with a date-stamp inscribed *Event Office Branch 2*.



Welsh Philatelic Society (WPS)

The WPS has its own web site
<http://www.wps.wales.org>

Annual subscriptions are £7 a year. The next meeting is on 27 November 2004 at the Old Barn Restaurant in Morriston, Swansea. A mid-Wales meeting will be held on 23 April 2005 at the Meiford Village Hall in Welshpool. More details of events can be obtained from the web site.

Other Web links

Useful links to stamp clubs:

Cardiff Philatelic Society:
<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/roger.gilbert/cardiffphilatelicsociety>

Barry Philatelic Society:
<http://www.stampdomain.com/barry>

The Stamp Domain (see the Newport page)
<http://www.stampdomain.com>

UK Philately (the gateway to the ABPS and NPS)
<http://www.ukphilately.org.uk>

John Perry, Honorary Secretary (01633 881068)
Email: sewales@btopenworld.com

Web site: www.perry60.freeseerve.co.uk